

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
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R 040808Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6635
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OTRA, EAID (JOHNSON, VERNAON C.)
SUBJECT: VISIT OF AF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY

1. I ACCOMPANIED DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY VERNON JOHNSON ON CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER KARGOUGOU MORNING APRIL 3. MEETING WAS MOST CORDIAL AND FRIENDLY. AT OUTSET JOHNSON STRESSED CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S NEW EMPHASIS ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS AND ADMIRATION FELT IN WASHINGTON FOR UPPER VOLTA'S EXCELLENT RECORD ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND BASIC FREEDOMS, AND FOR PRESIDENT LAMIZANA'S AND THE ARMY'S DECISION TO RETURN THE COUNTRY TO CIVILIAN RULE.

2. KARGOUGOU REPLIED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER'S CURRENT VISIT TO AFRICA, THE FIRST OF AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT, WAS A CLEAR INDICATION OF THE US GOVERNMENT'S DEEP INTEREST IN AFRICA, AS WAS JOHNSON'S OWN VISIT TO UPPER VOLTA AND OTHER SAHELIAN STATES. KARGOUGOU CONGRATULATED JOHNSON FOR HAVING MADE THE

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DIFFICULT TRIP FROM NIAMEY TO OUAGA BY ROAD WHICH WOULD GIVE HIM A BETTER APPRECIATION OF THE NEED FOR IMPROVED LAND COMMUNICATIONS AMONG SAHELIAN STATES. HE SAID IT WAS THROUGH TRAVEL IN THE BUSH AND VISITS TO SMALL VILLAGES THAT AMERICAN OFFICIALS COULD GET A REAL FEELING ABOUT THE PROBLEMS OF UPPER VOLTA, AND HE GAVE PARTICULAR PRAISE TO AMERICAN PEACE CORPS

VOLUNTEERS WHO HAD A REAL GRASP OF PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE RURAL AREAS. WITH REGARD TO HUMAN RIGHTS, KARGOUGOU SAID HE WAS PROUD THAT UPPER VOLTA PROBABLY HAD A BETTER RECORD THAN ANY OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRY. HE STRESSED THAT THIS WAS DUE TO THE PERSONAL EFFORTS OF PRESIDENT LAMIZANA WHO WOULD NOT TOLERATE ANY INFRINGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND BASIC FREEDOMS, TO THE POINT THAT HE WAS SOMETIMES ACCUSED OF TOLERATING A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF ANARCHY.

3. BESIDES CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, KARGOUGOU ADDED, UPPER VOLTA AND THE UNITED STATES SHARED OTHER INTERESTS AND THE OBJECTIVES OF THEIR FOREIGN POLICIES SEEMED TO COINCIDE IN MANY RESPECTS.

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WAS EXCELLENT AND THE VISIT OF A HIGH-RANKING OFFICIAL OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT WAS AN INDICATION THAT THIS COOPERATION WOULD BE MAINTAINED AND, HE HOPED, STRENGTHENED EVEN FURTHER IN THE FUTURE.

4. ON LEAVING, JOHNSON THANKED KARGOUGOU FOR THE WELCOME AND CORDIALITY ACCORDING TO HIM BY VOLTA AUTHORITIES. HE STRESSED THAT HIS VISIT TO UPPER VOLTA WAS A FACT-FINDING MISSION AND THAT THE SUCCESS OF HIS MISSION DEPENDED HEAVILY ON THE TYPE OF CONVERSATION HE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HAD JUST HAD WITH THE MINISTER AND THOSE ALREADY SCHEDULED WITH THE PRESIDENT AND OTHER HIGH-RANKING OFFICIALS. GRAHAM

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